

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 NSC-05 INR-07 /042 W

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R 091221Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4637

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CHUSMTM DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

CINCEUR

S E C R E T JIDDA 3315

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, OVIP (RUMSFELD, DONALD H.)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM
CROWN PRINCE FAHD BIN ABD AL-AZIZ CONCERNING THE PROPOSED
VISIT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RUMSFELD TO SAUDI ARABIA.

2. BEGIN TEXT. I RECEIVED YOUR EXCELLENCY'S LETTER WHICH
REFERRED TO THE REVIEW WITH YOUR EXCELLENCY IN TAIF LAST
SEPTEMBER CONCERNING MATTERS CONNECTED TO MILITARY SUPPLIES
AND THE WISH OF HIS EXCELLENCY, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
MR. RUMSFELD, TO VISIT THE KINGDOM NEXT JULY TO COMPLETE DIS-
CUSSION OF THESE MATTERS WITH HIS SAUDI COUNTERPART. IT IS
OUR PLEASURE TO INVITE HIS EXCELLENCY TO THE CITY OF TAIF
SUNDAY, JULY 26, 1976. WE HOPE THIS DATE WILL BE
CONVENIENT. WITH BEST WISHES, FAHD BIN ABDUL AZIZ. END TEXT.

3. MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN ON MAY 5 GAVE TO
CHUSMTM AN ADVANCE COPY OF FOLLOWING LETTER TO
SECRETARY RUMSFELD. THE ORIGINAL IS STILL WENDING ITS WAY TO
US THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

4. BEGIN TEXT. THE HONORABLE DONALD H. RUMSFELD,
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. GREETINGS: THE FINE RELATIONS THAT
TIE SAUDI ARABIA AND USA MOTIVATE ME TO INVITE YOU TO
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VISIT THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA IN ORDER TO FOLLOW-UP THE

DISCUSSIONS OF MATTERS WHICH WILL RESULT IN MUTUAL BENEFITS
AND ADVANTAGES TO OUR COUNTRIES.
IT IS MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOUR VISIT TO
SAUDI ARABIA AS OF 26 JULY 1976, HOPING THAT YOUR BUSY
SCHEDULE WILL ALLOW YOU TO ACCEPT THIS INVITATION AT THE
DATE MENTIONED ABOVE AND THAT YOUR LENGTH OF STAY WILL ENABLE
YOU TO SEE ALL ASPECTS OF PROGRESS IN THE KINGDOM OF
SAUDI ARABIA.
AWAITING YOUR REPLY, I THINK YOU AND WISH YOU
CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS. /S/ SULTAN BIN ABDUL
AZIZ. END TEXT.

5. IN GIVING THE LETTER TO CHUSMTM, PRINCE SULTAN
SPECIFICALLY SUGGESTED THAT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PLAN TO ARRIVE
SAUDI ARABIA ON OR ABOUT JULY 20. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD
BE OPENING THE SERVICE ATHLETIC GAMES AT KHAMIS MUSHAYT
ON JULY 26 AND WOULD LIKE THE SECDEF TO ATTEND WITH HIM.
(SAUDIS ARE PLANNING A SIGNIFICANT MILITARY
DEMONSTRATION AT THAT TIME.) PRINCE SULTAN TOLD
CHUSMTM THAT HE HOPED THAT SECDEF COULD VISIT FOR
ABOUT FIVE - SEVEN DAYS SO THAT "HE CAN TRAVEL AROUND
THE COUNTRY AND SEE THE EXTENT OF US - SAUDI
COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN MILITARY MODERNIZATION."

6. COMMENT. THE PRESENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE VISIT OF
SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND COMMANDER OF THE NATIONAL
GUARD PRINCE ABDALLAH TO THE US IS JULY 6 - 23. WE
UNDERSTAND THIS MAY BE FURTHER REFINED AND POSSIBLY
SHORTENED. WE DO NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT A
RESPONSE TO PRINCE SULTAN SUGGESTING A FIRM ARRIVAL DATE FOR
THE SECDEF TO THE KINGDOM SHOULD BE GIVEN UNTIL AFTER
THE DATES OF PRINCE ABDALLAH'S VISIT HAVE BEEN DECIDED.
PRINCE ABDALLAH MIGHT WELL BE OFFENDED IF HIS HOST, THE
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, WERE TO DEPART THE US FOR SAUDI
ARABIA WHILE HE WAS STILL IN THE US. THIS WOULD BE THE
CASE EVEN IF THE WASHINGTON PORTION OF THE VISIT AND
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN IT HAD BEEN
CONCLUDED SOME TIME PREVIOUSLY. WE SUGGEST THAT IT WOULD
BE MOST APPROPRIATE IF THE SECDEF WERE TO PLAN HIS ARRIVAL
IN SAUDI ARABIA NOT LESS THAN TWO DAYS AFTER THE DEPARTURE
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OF PRINCE ABDALLAH'S FROM THE US. THIS WOULD, AS A MATTER
OF COURTESY TO ABDALLAH, GIVE HIM TIME TO RETURN TO SAUDI
ARABIA TO BE PRESENT AT THE ARRIVAL OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

7. THE APPARENT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PRINCE FAHD'S
INVITATION FOR SECDEF TO BE IN TAIF ON JULY 26
AND SULTAN'S DESIRE THAT HE BE IN KHAMIS MUSHAYT
ON THAT DATE WILL RESOLVE ITSELF IN THE COURSE

OF ARRANGING THE SCHEDULE WITH PRINCE SULTAN.

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